

## Does Reading Literary Texts Have Any Impact on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Retention?

### LISANT LES TEXTES LITTÉRAIRES A-T-IL UN IMPACT DE CONSERVATION DE VOCABULAIRE SUR LES ÉTUDIANTS D'EFL?

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**Abstract:** This study seeks to find out whether EFL learners' exposure to literary texts is in any way different from their exposure to nonliterary texts with respect to their ability to deal with related vocabulary items. Furthermore, the present study also sets out to examine whether EFL learners perform differently on reading comprehension tests derived from literary texts compared with those derived from nonliterary ones. The analysis of the data brought to light the fact that exposure to a plethora of literary texts does not imperatively bring any significant gain in the comprehension of literary or nonliterary texts. Even so, it is concluded that exposure to vocabulary items in literary texts may, in point of fact, help EFL learners to build up solid vocabulary knowledge.

**Key words:** Extensive Reading; Literature; Reading Comprehension; Vocabulary Acquisition

**Résumé:** Cette étude cherche à découvrir s'il y aurait des différences aux niveaux des résultats en comparant avec l'exposition des étudiants d'EFL aux textes littéraires et des étudiants d'EFL qui sont exposés aux textes non littéraires en ce qui concerne de leur capacité de traiter les articles relatifs de vocabulaire. En outre, la présente étude également mise à examiner si les étudiants d'EFL exécutent différemment sur des essais de compréhension de lecture dérivés des textes littéraires comparés à ceux dérivés de les non littéraire. L'analyse des données a mis en évidence le fait que l'exposition à une pléthore de textes littéraires n'apporte impérativement aucun gain significatif dans la compréhension des textes littéraires ou non littéraire. Néanmoins, on le conclut que l'exposition aux articles de vocabulaire en textes littéraires peut, en effet, aider des étudiants d'EFL à accumuler la connaissance solide de vocabulaire.

**Mots clés:** Lecture étendue; Littérature; Compréhension de lecture; Acquisition de vocabulaire

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a living, growing entity clothed in the flesh of words. Vocabulary items can be presented, explained, and included in all kinds of activities. As language teachers we must not only arouse our student's interest in words but also pave their way toward a personal development in this area. We can help our students by exposing them to ideas as how to learn vocabulary items. Students need to realize that words do not label things, but classify concepts. We may use language in innovative ways to bring new concepts to our students' attention (Picken, 2007). The teachers must be aware

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of teaching techniques that are at their disposal, choosing carefully those that contextualize word meanings best. They should try to awaken in their students a genuine interest in vocabulary (see Paran, 2006).

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and thus provides much of the basis for other skills. Without an acceptable range of vocabulary items and some strategies to acquire and master new lexical items, learners do not proceed up to their potential and are hence discouraged from making most of such language learning opportunities as listening to radio, listening to native speakers, using language in different contexts, or watching television. Vocabulary and its role in language curricula have been subject to changing winds and shifting sands of language teaching approaches and methods (Brown, 2001).

One of the corollaries of early approaches to Communicative Language Teaching (hereafter CLT) was a paucity of focus on lexical items, the building blocks of language. While traditional language teaching methods underlined the study of vocabulary items through lists, drills, and flash cards, at a certain period of time vocabulary teaching was neglected, or as Zimmerman (1997, p. 5) puts it, "undervalued."

In light of authentic and natural classroom activities, it was the focus on vocabulary that was almost forgotten. Moreover, because of CLT's emphasis on the role of teachers as facilitators not the sole authority in the classroom, teachers were reluctant to assume directive roles in teaching vocabulary. The end of the twentieth century, however, coincided with a rebirth of systematic focus on lexical forms of language across different proficiency levels and contexts. This emphasis ranged from very direct, explicit teaching of vocabulary, as in Michael Lewis' (1993, 1997) Lexical Approach, to more implicit, indirect approaches in which vocabulary items were embedded within communicative tasks.

Nowadays, vocabulary teaching has assumed a more central role in language curriculum development (Hiebert & Kamil, 2009). Instead of providing students with word lists to be memorized, vocabulary items are presented in meaningful, contextualized language. By way of explanation, nowadays the lexical forms are treated communicatively (Brown, 2001).

## **2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT**

Reading has long been seen as a major source of vocabulary growth. Nation (1996), for example, is of the opinion that extensive reading, if accompanied by providing large quantities of suitably graded input, provided across a range of genres and topics, and supported by some language-focused activities, is an essential, worthwhile strand of a language course. Incidental vocabulary learning occurs when the mind concentrates elsewhere, e.g., on understanding a text or using language to get one's ideas across.

It is axiomatic that, as second language speakers, we have not been explicitly taught the majority of words we happen to know. Furthermore, beyond a certain level of proficiency in a second or foreign language, vocabulary is mostly learned implicitly (Decarrico, 1998). It should be noted, however, that explicit learning is thought to be necessary in the initial stages of language learning. According to Decarrico (1998), a two-thousand-word base is considered as the minimum threshold that helps incidental language learning. Exposure to a word is a key factor for incidental learning to take place. In fact, lack of exposure is a common problem facing language learners. One useful strategy to tackle this problem is to expose students to *extensive reading*, sometimes termed the book flood approach, whereby reading is done consistently over a certain span of time (Woodinsky & Nation, 1988).

Learning vocabulary through the book flood approach can benefit students across different proficiency levels. The reading material can be presented in the form of graded readers. Simplified reading materials can help students gradually build up their lexical knowledge. Low-proficiency learners can draw on graded readers in order to expose themselves to a large amount of high-frequency input (Coady & Huckin, 1997). It has been suggested that intermediate learners read a variety of authentic texts on the same topic because in such texts topic-specific vocabulary is repeated throughout. Advanced learners, in turn, should be provided with a wide range of authentic texts because encountering a word in different contexts expands what is known about it (Schmitt, 2000).

Extensive reading is verifiably a major source of incidental learning and a number of studies have clinched the positive effects of extensive reading activities on vocabulary growth (Chun & Plass, 1996; Day, Omura, & Hiramatsu, 1991; Hulstijn, Hollander, & Greidanus, 1996; Knight, 1994; Zimmerman, 1997). Selection of texts for extensive reading is an absolutely crucial decision to make. In this regard, literature can be a potentially invaluable, rich source of meaning-focused input. Literary texts are undoubtedly capable of providing students with real-life, authentic samples of language. Literary texts, it is argued, help students build up lexical knowledge because they make for more comprehensible input (Krashen, 1989).

### **3. LITERATURE IN TEFL/TESL**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the study of literature in relation to language (Picken, 2007). There is renewed awareness that literature has a valid place in general language learning. Many educators have acknowledged the academic, intellectual, cultural, and linguistic benefits of the study of literature (Paran, 2006). Using literature with EFL learners provides a rich source of pedagogical activities (Lazar, 1990, 1999). Literature is used to improve both the literary and the linguistic competence of such learners. Widdowson (1975, p. 80) contends that "literature should be viewed as discourse." The learners' aim should be to learn how the language system -the structures and vocabulary of English- is used for communication. Literature and language teaching should be linked and made mutually supportive and reinforcing (Elliot, 1990, Widdowson, 1995).

Besides, EFL learners will, in point of fact, enrich their active vocabulary as a result of exposure to language. The kind of exposure EFL learners should have is what Krashen (1989) refers to as comprehensible input or  $i+1$ : language which contains linguistic items that are slightly beyond the learner's present linguistic competence. And it is such input, particularly when combined with interaction, which is believed to promote language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular (Laufer, 1991). Furthermore, EFL teachers have generally agreed that literature helps learners to build up a range of vocabulary items. The vocabulary used in written English and especially in literature is many times larger than the vocabulary in common speech (Shen, 2002, Widdowson, 1995).

Goatly (2000) argues that literature will help all language skills because it draws on linguistic knowledge and is thus based on subtle vocabulary usage and complex syntax. Literature lays bare the richest variations of vocabulary discrimination.

According to Elliot (1990), reading literature is the most pleasant route to the command of language because it is in literature that the learner is most likely to find words used in the widest range of contexts. Additionally, it is in literature that the learner will find words passionately or delicately conveying emotions and attitudes. Literature provides learners with a rich source of authentic material over a wide range of registers (Elliot, 1990). Even a skill-based course must have content: let that content be truly worthwhile, stimulating, and motivating.

In a well-known article on the use of literature in language teaching, Edmondson (1997), however, claims that the field of language teaching is generally characterized by speculation, assertion and counter-assertion. Others, even where more favourable in principle, have agreed that there is more advocacy than evidence to be found in this field. Hanauer (2001), for example, claims that there is little actual empirical data related to literature and that current arguments both for and against the use of literature for EFL learners are only loosely based on empirical evidence (see Hall, 2007).

### **4. CURRENT STUDY**

This study sets out to investigate whether EFL learners' exposure to literary texts is in any way different from their exposure to nonliterary texts with respect to their ability to deal with related vocabulary items extracted from the two types of texts. Furthermore, the present study makes an attempt to find answers to the question of whether EFL learners perform differently on reading comprehension tests that have been designed based on literary or nonliterary texts. Accordingly, the following (null) hypotheses were formulated:

**H<sub>01</sub>.** There is no statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on tests of vocabulary.

**H<sub>02</sub>.** There is no statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on tests of literary versus nonliterary vocabulary.

**H<sub>03</sub>.** There is no statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on reading comprehension tests.

**H<sub>04</sub>.** There is no statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on reading comprehension tests that have been designed based on literary or nonliterary texts

### **5. METHODOLOGY**

A total number of 140 Iranian undergraduate students (both male and female) were randomly selected from among senior students of English literature and English translation. Eighty seven of the participants were studying English literature and fifty three of them were studying English translation.

Data elicitation in the present study was done through administering a four-part test. The test consisted of two literary and two nonliterary texts. Texts I-IV were taken from Tahririan's (1991) *Developing Reading Proficiency I*, The 2004 Iranian nation-wide MA entrance exam for TEFL, the website [www.English-zone.com](http://www.English-zone.com), and Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, respectively. Each text was followed by 5 reading comprehension and 10 vocabulary questions. All questions appeared in multiple-choice format.

The test was administered by the course instructors themselves. The participants were asked to answer the questions within the span of their class time. The test administrators were available to answer any questions the participants might have. In order to guarantee the representativeness of the sample, the participants were selected from among the population of senior English students at different universities.

Participants' performance was analyzed in terms of subgroups' performance on sub-tests. Therefore, after the sources of variance were identified, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique was used to determine the statistical significance among group means. In so doing, the researchers considered students' performance on the tests as a single variable and compared the means of eight sub-groups on this variable. Consequently, two sources of variance, Factor A and Factor B, were identified and the statistical significance of the difference among group means was examined on the basis of those factors.

As the next step, the researchers considered EFL learners' performance as comprising two elements, i.e., vocabulary and reading comprehension. Therefore, allowing for the source of variance between and within groups, the researchers were able to compute the statistical significance of differences among group means based on a third factor, namely the interaction effect, or Factor A.B. Regarding vocabulary and reading scores as separate dependent variables and group means as an independent variable with several levels, the researchers used two separate two-way ANOVAs to do their analysis.

## 6. RESULTS

The descriptive scores of the participants are tabulated in table 1. As it can be seen in the table, the independent variable is subdivided into 8 groups (levels). The performance of the students of literature as a whole is broken down into 4 groups: their performance on the literary reading test (L-R-L group), on the nonliterary reading test (L-R-N group), on the literary vocabulary test (L-V-L group), and finally on the nonliterary vocabulary test (L-V-N group). Likewise, the performance of the students of translation is considered as comprising their performance on the literary reading test (T-R-L group), on the nonliterary reading test (T-R-N group), on the literary vocabulary test (T-V-L group), and finally on the nonliterary vocabulary test (T-V-N group).

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Concerning All Groups**

Group	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
L-R-L	87	9.6782	3.9752	.00	18.00
L-R-N	87	11.4483	4.0656	.00	18.00
T-R-L	53	10.5660	3.1956	4.00	16.00
T-R-N	53	11.3585	2.6537	2.00	18.00
L-V-L	87	12.3218	3.2403	6.00	20.00
L-V-N	87	11.2069	2.9100	4.00	17.00
T-V-L	53	9.5472	3.0607	3.00	15.00
T-V-N	53	9.4151	2.8314	5.00	16.00

As shown in table 1, Literature majors got the maximum mean score ( $M=12.321$ ) on the literary vocabulary test (L-V-L group). On the other hand, the minimum group mean ( $M=9.415$ ) belongs to Translation majors on the nonliterary vocabulary test (T-V-N group). However, it can be deduced from the table that, on the whole, Literature majors got fairly better mean scores on both literary and nonliterary vocabulary tests while Translation majors had a better performance on both literary and nonliterary reading comprehension tests.

In order to determine the statistical significance of the observed differences between group means, i.e., to analyze the effects of the single independent variable with several 8 levels on the dependent variable, a one-way ANOVA was used. The results of computations have been presented in table 2. As shown in the table, there is a statistically significant difference between means.

**Table 2: One-way ANOVA Concerning All Groups**

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	566.194	7	80.885	7.186	.000*
Within Groups	6212.978	552	11.255		
Total	6779.171	559			

\*Sig at p<.01

Table 3 represents the descriptive statistics for one of the dependent variables, i.e., vocabulary. As shown in the table, compared with Translation majors, Literature majors (LIT group) had a better performance on both literary (M=12.321) and nonliterary (M=11.206) vocabulary tests. In other words, it can be said that Literature majors (LIT group) outperformed Translation majors (TRA group) on the vocabulary tests. However, LIT group's mean on the literary vocabulary test was slightly better than the one on the nonliterary vocabulary test.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Concerning Vocabulary**

Text	Group	Mean	SD	N
LIT	LIT	12.3218	3.2403	87
	TRA	9.5472	3.0607	53
	Total	11.2714	3.4388	140
NON	LIT	11.2069	2.9100	87
	TRA	9.4151	2.8314	53
	Total	10.5286	2.9999	140

To assess the statistical significance of the observed differences between group means, a two-way ANOVA was used. The results of the calculations have been presented in table 4. As shown in the table, the first source of variance was within-groups variance (LIT-NON), i.e., literary and nonliterary vocabulary tests. However, the mean difference stemming from this factor (Factor A), i.e., literary versus nonliterary vocabulary tests (LIT-NON), was not statistically significant. As for Factor B, i.e., Literature majors' versus Translation majors' performance (LIT-TRA), which relates to between-groups variance, the calculated F-ratio shows that the mean difference was statistically significant. The third factor, namely interaction effect (Factor A.B) was, in turn, not statistically significant. Therefore, it can be argued that Factor A.B did not play a statistically significant role.

**Table 4: Two-way ANOVA Concerning Vocabulary**

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
LIT_NON	25.608	1	25.608	2.788	.096
LIT_TRA	343.399	1	343.399	37.384	.000*
LIT_NO	15.908	1	15.908	1.732	.189
LIT_TRA	2535.264				
Error		276	9.186		
Total	36200.000	280			

\*Sig at p<.01

The researchers have presented the descriptive statistics concerning the other dependent variable, i.e., reading comprehension, in table 5. As displayed in the table, on the average, Translation majors (with the group mean of 10.566) performed better than Literature majors (with the group mean of 9.678) on the literary reading comprehension test.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics Concerning Reading Comprehension**

Text	Group	Mean	SD	N
LIT	LIT	9.6782	3.9752	87
	TRA	10.5660	3.1956	53
	Total	10.0143	3.7127	140
NON	LIT	11.4483	4.0656	87
	TRA	11.3585	2.6537	53
	Total	11.4143	3.5865	140

Comparing variation between LIT and TRA groups in terms of their performance on the nonliterary reading sub-test, it can be concluded that there was a slight difference between the two groups.

In order to come up with a conclusion as to the statistical significance of the observed group mean differences, the researchers used a two-way ANOVA test, the results of which have been displayed in table 6.

**Table 6: Two-way ANOVA Concerning Reading Comprehension**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
LIT_NON	108.140	1	108.140	8.116	.005*
LIT_TRA	10.489	1	10.489	.787	.376
LIT_NON	15.740	1	15.740	1.181	.278
LIT_TRA					
Error	3677.713	276	13.325		
Total	35984.000	280			

\*Sig at p<.01

Regarding the first source of variance (Factor A), the estimated F-ratio was higher than the critical value of F-ratios. Therefore, the difference between group means due to Factor A, i.e., within-group variation, was statistically significant. As for the second source of variance, Factor B or between-group variance, the calculated F-ratio was quite smaller than F critical values. Hence, the variation of group means on the reading tests due to Factor B was not statistically significant. Likewise, considering the third source of variance, Factor A.B or the interaction effect, the estimated F-ratio was lower than the critical F-ratios. As such, it can be inferred that this factor did not exert any statistically significant effect on EFL learners' performance on the reading comprehension tests.

## **7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

Drawing on the aforementioned statistical analyses, the researchers seem to be able to deal with the null hypotheses the study sought answers to. As the analyses revealed, only 1 out of 4 formulated null hypotheses can be rejected. In discussing data in table 4, it was inferred that there was no statistically significant difference among participants in terms of their performance on tests of vocabulary. In other words, Factor A, variance within groups, is not a statistically significant factor contributing to group mean differences. Therefore, the kind of vocabulary test, i.e., literary versus nonliterary, is not a statistically significant source of variance between means.

It can, nevertheless, be concluded that the first null hypothesis can be rejected. Precisely put, there is a statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on tests of vocabulary. Therefore, Factor B, i.e., participants' major, is a significant factor in explaining group mean differences. For this reason, Literature majors outperformed Translation majors on both literary and nonliterary vocabulary tests.

The second null hypothesis, is, however, not rejected since the interaction effect, Factor A.B, does not seem to cause any statistically significant difference among group means. Therefore, the interaction between groups and within groups does not play any statistically significant role in group mean differences. For this reason, it can be deduced that there is no statistically significant difference between Literature and Translation majors regarding their performance on literary as opposed to nonliterary vocabulary tests. The analysis of variance also suggests that there is a statistically significant difference among participants with regard to their performance on tests of reading comprehension. Therefore, Factor A, the kind of reading comprehension test (literary versus nonliterary), should be considered as a statistically significant source of variance.

As for the third null hypothesis, the results of the ANOVA test foster the idea that there is no statistically significant difference between Literature majors and Translation majors in terms of their performance on tests of reading comprehension. Along these lines, Factor B, the participants' major, is not a statistically significant source of variance between group means. In other words, the third null hypothesis is not rejected.

Factor A.B does not bring about any statistically significant difference among group means either. Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis is not rejected. It can be deduced that the interaction between literary versus nonliterary factor (Factor A) and Literature versus Translation factor (Factor B) is not a statistically significant source of variance.

Based on the findings, this study can have certain pedagogical implications. To begin with, a literary-based methodology for teaching vocabulary is recommended. This does not mean that only literary texts should be used in the classroom. Teachers may use literary texts and then extend them to nonliterary ones in order to make students familiar with all kinds of materials. Implementing this approach, of course, requires intensive training, both in terms of appropriate design of learning tasks and in terms of operational procedures. Moreover, perhaps the most significant pedagogical implication to be drawn from this research is that learning vocabulary through context, particularly literary contexts, should be emphasized. Word meanings are learned best within the context and thus more frequent contextual presentations should be regarded as an inseparable part of any language instruction.

However, it would seem that two complementary approaches are also needed in this regard: encouraging a substantial quantity of reading and developing guessing skills. Teachers need to motivate EFL learners to embark on extensive reading (Schmitt, 2000).

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## APPENDIX

### Text I

Pottery reached its zenith between the 800's and the 1300's. Muslim artists developed many techniques that are still used today. For example, they engraved into slip, an earthy coating under the glaze. This technique was imitated by Byzantine and Italian ceramists. Islamic potters also painted with a metallic pigment on a white or blue glaze to produce so-called luster-painting. This difficult technique, practiced in the Middle East and Spain from the 800's through the 1600's, was also taken over by the potters of the Renaissance period in Italy.

Builders used bright tiles decorated with geometric or arabesque designs for wall surfaces and fountains. Outstanding examples of tile work decorate mosque walls, domes, minarets in Isfahan, the capital of Iran in 1600's. Tile work was an ancient Persian art. Pictures of royal life in the 400's B.C. appear on tile facings of palaces in the ancient Persian capital of Susa. Muslim tile work may have developed from pre-Islamic Persia.

### Comprehension check

1. Tile work perhaps developed.....
  - a) between the 800's and the 1300's
  - b) before Islam in Persia
  - c) after 400 B.C.
  - d) in Isfahan
2. According to the passage, Isfahan.....
  - a) is the capital of Iran
  - b) has good examples of tile work
  - c) makes domes and minarets
  - d) was the capital of Sosa
3. We understand from the passage that.....
  - a) pottery should be older than tile work
  - b) tile work should be older than pottery
  - c) pottery originally came from Byzantine
  - d) tile work is an Islamic art
4. Tile work, according to the passage, is....
  - a) often used instead of pottery
  - b) the same as luster-painting
  - c) mostly used for decoration
  - d) rarely seen in palaces
5. The Renaissance period in Italy.....
  - a) must have been after the 1600's
  - b) was before the 1600's
  - c) was between the 400's and the 1600's
  - d) must have been about the time of Christ

### Vocabulary check

Choose the word or phrase that is most nearly similar in meaning to the word in question.

1. Zenith
  - a) real greatness
  - b) highest development
  - c) artistic status
  - d) developmental period
2. Engrave
  - a) cut
  - b) cover
  - c) figure
  - d) decorate
3. Coating
  - a) cloth
  - b) material
  - c) curtain
  - d) covering
4. Glaze
  - a) wide opening
  - b) deep cut
  - c) shiny surface
  - d) flat disc
5. Pigment
  - a) colorful light
  - b) strong radiation
  - c) natural coloring
  - d) slight radiation
6. Luster
  - a) dullness
  - b) colorfulness
  - c) beauty
  - d) brightness
7. Take over
  - a) replace
  - b) imitate
  - c) repeat
  - d) accept
8. Tile
  - a) baked clay
  - b) metal object
  - c) painted dish
  - d) wooden craft
9. Fountain
  - a) deep well
  - b) basement
  - c) deep spring
  - d) ceiling
10. Royal
  - a) noble
  - b) faithful
  - c) native
  - d) truthful



## **Text II**

Very commonly we are faced with a choice between several courses of action, all of which have their own pros and cons. This state of affairs- in psychological jargon multiple approach- avoidance conflict- accounts for a great deal of our worrying: worrying, that is, what to do? How do we deal with worries? We can avoid the situations which induce them. We can deny that we have the worry at all. Alternatively, we may repress or “comatose” it. Both are hazardous: the former may lead to free-floating, clinical anxiety, while the latter is a way of saying that many physical afflictions seem to be primarily emotional in origin.

Temporary relief from anxiety can be obtained through engaging in a variety of coping behaviors including many of the commonest items of our behavioral repertoire. Smoking, drinking, sleeping, eating, taking strenuous exercise, day dreaming: all can be used to reduce anxiety when the occasion demands it. It is when they fail that worrying or anxiety threatens to become a clinical problem. It is difficult to decide at what point worrying ceases to be “normal”. People get seriously ill, plans go awry. In practice, anxiety is judged to be pathological when it curtails our ability to lead a normal existence.

But at less intense levels, anxiety and worrying have great value. By worrying we may understand better the origins of the worry and, thereby, stave off a possible breakdown. It may also play a significant part in recovery from bereavement by helping us to come to terms with reality. In everyday life, anxiety energizes us and improves performance of a wide variety of tasks; it also galvanizes us to achieve more. Perhaps the time to get worried is when you are at worrying.

## **Comprehension check**

1. According to the passage, complete denial of worry may result in.....
  - a) physical affliction
  - b) clinical anxiety
  - c) emotional problem
  - d) repressed anxiety
2. Considering physical afflictions as emotional in origin is a result of.....
  - a) repressing worries
  - b) avoiding anxiety
  - c) denying worries
  - d) forgetting anxiety
3. It can be inferred from the passage that to reduce anxiety we.....
  - a) should get strenuous exercise
  - b) can study the origins of the worry
  - c) should repress the worry temporarily
  - d) can do anything the occasion demands
4. The passage is most probably about.....
  - a) the effects of anxiety
  - b) the origins of anxiety
  - c) cons and pros of worries
  - d) ways of dealing with worries
5. Based on the passage, which of the following is NOT one of the values of anxiety? It.....
  - a) helps to study the reasons of worries
  - b) enables us to lead a normal existence
  - c) gives us energy to improve our daily tasks
  - d) can, indirectly, reduce the risk of a breakdown

## **Vocabulary check**

Choose the word or phrase that is most nearly similar in meaning to the word in question:

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Jargon      | b) cause          |
| a) cliché      | c) represent      |
| b) aspect      | d) insure         |
| c) terminology | 3. Affliction     |
| d) opinion     | a) manner         |
| 2. Induce      | b) characteristic |
| a) increase    | c) complex        |

- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| d) suffering  | b) reduce        |
| 4. Repertoire | c) damage        |
| a) reservoir  | d) reflect       |
| b) behavior   | 8. Stave off     |
| c) manner     | a) decrease      |
| d) temper     | b) cure          |
| 5. Cease      | c) prevent       |
| a) stand      | d) face          |
| b) choose     | 9. Bereavement   |
| c) stop       | a) loss by death |
| d) remain     | b) discomfort    |
| 6. Awry       | c) misfortune    |
| a) flat       | d) sickness      |
| b) slow       | 10. Galvanize    |
| c) useless    | a) enable        |
| d) wrong      | b) activate      |
| 7. Curtail    | c) encourage     |
| a) degrade    | d) arouse        |

### **Text III**

For the next eight or ten months, Oliver was the victim of a systematic course of treachery and deception. He was brought up by hand. The hungry and destitute situation of the infant orphan was duly reported by the workhouse authorities to the parish authorities.

The parish authorities inquired with dignity of the workhouse authorities whether there was no female domiciled in “the house” who was in a situation to impart to Oliver Twist the consolation and nourishment of which he stood in need. The workhouse authorities replied with humility that there was not. Upon this, the parish authorities magnanimously and humanely resolved that Oliver shouldn’t be “farmed”, or, in other words, that he should be dispatched to a branch-workhouse, some three miles off, where twenty or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws rolled about the floor all day without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female, who received the culprits and for the consideration of seven pence- half penny per small head per week.

### **Comprehension check**

1. Which period of Oliver Twist’s life does the passage describe?
  - a) infancy
  - b) youth
  - c) childhood
  - d) adulthood
2. We can understand from the passage that Oliver was brought up.....
  - a) by parish authorities
  - b) by juvenile offenders
  - c) with care and consolation
  - d) in hunger and destitution
3. The parish authorities, according to the passage.....
  - a) brought up Oliver with inconvenience
  - b) dispatched Oliver to a branch-workhouse
  - c) accepted Oliver very generously
  - d) took care of Oliver themselves
4. The branch-workhouse was governed by.....
  - a) 30 juvenile offenders
  - b) an elderly female
  - c) the parish authorities
  - d) the workhouse authorities
5. The writer of the story implies that Oliver was.....
  - a) brought up in the hands of treacherous people
  - b) one of the offenders against the poor-laws

- c) one of the victims of poor social conditions
- d) the unwanted child of a destitute family

### Vocabulary check

Choose the word or phrase that is most nearly similar in meaning to the word in question:

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Treachery    | 6. Magnanimously   |
| a) disloyalty   | a) mercifully      |
| b) disgrace     | b) emotionally     |
| c) disapproval  | c) suitably        |
| d) disorder     | d) magnificently   |
| 2. Destitute    | 7. Resolve         |
| a) starved      | a) mention         |
| b) cruel        | b) decide          |
| c) miserable    | c) suggest         |
| d) tough        | d) justify         |
| 3. Domiciled    | 8. Juvenile        |
| a) appointed    | a) noisy           |
| b) settled      | b) naughty         |
| c) accepted     | c) lonely          |
| d) seated       | d) young           |
| 4. Impart       | 9. Superintendence |
| a) apply        | a) impression      |
| b) give         | b) agreement       |
| c) turn         | c) management      |
| d) point        | d) acceptance      |
| 5. Consolation  | 10. Culprit        |
| a) treatment    | a) servant         |
| b) comfort      | b) refugee         |
| c) consultation | c) outlaw          |
| d) care         | d) immigrant       |

### Text IV

The idea that there is neither good nor evil- in any absolute moral or religious sense- is widespread in our times. There are various relativistic and behaviorist standards of ethics. If these standards even admit the distinction between good and evil, it is as a relative matter and not as a whirlwind of choices that lies at the center of living. In any such state of mind, conflict can at best be only a petty matter, lacking true universality. The acts of the evildoer and of the virtuous man alike become dramatically neutralized. Imagine the reduced effect of *Crime and Punishment* or *The Brothers Karamazov* had Dostoevsky thought that good and evil, as portrayed in those books, were wholly relative, and if he had had no conviction about them.

You can not have a vital literature if you ignore or shun evil. What you get then is the world of Pollyanna, goody-goody in place of the good. *Cry, the Beloved Country* is a great and dramatic novel because Alan Paton, in addition to being a skilled workman, sees with clear eyes both good and evil, differentiates them, pitches them into conflict with each other, and takes sides. He sees that the native boy Absalom Kumalo, who has murdered, cannot be judged justly without taking into account the environment that has had part in shaping him. But Paton sees, too, that Absalom the individual, not society the abstraction, committed the act and is responsible for it. Mr. Paton understands mercy. He knows that this precious thing is not evoked by sentimental impulse, but by a searching examination of the realities of human action. Mercy follows a judgment; it does not precede it.

One of the novels by the talented Paul Bowels, *Let It Come Down*, is full of motion, full of sensational depravities, and is a crashing bore. The book recognizes no good, admits no evil, and is coldly indifferent to the moral behavior of its characters. It is a long shrug. Such a view of life is non-dramatic and negates the vital essence of drama.

### Comprehension check

1. According to the passage, Paton's novel is a great dramatic novel because of Paton's.....
  - a) behaviorist beliefs
  - b) willingness to make judgments
  - c) insight into human behavior

- d) treatment of good and evil as abstractions
2. In our age, according to the passage, the standpoint often taken in the area of ethics is the..... .
- a) relativistic view of morals
  - b) belief that good and evil can be equated
  - c) greater concern with religion
  - d) greater concern with universal standards
3. The phrase “the world of Pollyanna” (line 12) means a situation in which..... .
- a) evil substitutes for good
  - b) all is good because evil is ignored
  - c) evil becomes preferable to good
  - d) everything is viewed pessimistically
4. The author believes that in great literature, good and evil are..... .
- a) truly universal
  - b) constantly in conflict
  - c) relative terms
  - d) dramatically neutralized
5. The native boy in *Cry, the Beloved Country* is viewed by Paton as..... .
- a) a victim of society
  - b) a precious thing who acted on impulse
  - c) a character who could not be judged justly
  - d) an individual ultimately responsible for his actions

### Vocabulary check

Choose the word or phrase that is most nearly similar in meaning to the word in question:

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Petty               | 6. Pitch into        |
| a) crucial             | a) invite            |
| b) unimportant         | b) arouse            |
| c) local               | c) challenge         |
| d) incomplete          | d) motivate          |
| 2. Virtuous            | 7. Depravity         |
| a) good-tempered       | a) virtue            |
| b) morally good        | b) action            |
| c) well-behaved        | c) evil              |
| d) rationally flexible | d) scene             |
| 3. Portray             | 8. Crashing          |
| a) represent           | a) extreme           |
| b) feel                | b) awesome           |
| c) claim               | c) wonderful         |
| d) refer               | d) careless          |
| 4. Conviction          | 9. Bore              |
| a) agreement           | a) intolerable thing |
| b) paradox             | b) showing-off       |
| c) general truth       | c) piercing scream   |
| d) firm belief         | d) praising          |
| 5. Shun                | 10. Shrug            |
| a) determine           | a) carelessness      |
| b) avoid               | b) boredom           |
| c) minimize            | c) attention         |
| d) forget              | d) appreciati        |